

On July 1, 1978, at the age of 21, he was ordained at Wat Somanat Vihara, Bangkok with Chao Phrakhun Somdej Phra Wanrat (Jub Thithadhammo), the abbot of Wat Sommant Vihara, to be a preceptor.

Since being ordained as a novice, monks have continued to study the discipline. He was given duties continually related to the community because they must perform their duties in teaching Dhamma and meditation all the time.

In the year 1993, he was assigned by Phra Thepwaraporn and was approved by Chao prakhun Somdej Phra wanrat (Jab Thitadhammo), the abbot of Wat Sommanat Vihara, to practice religious activities in the construction of the Wat Florida Dhammaram in Kissimmee, Florida to be a spiritual center of people of all nations. Teaching both morality and meditation training.

On April 15, 1993, Wat Florida Dhammaram was opened as a meditation center. Then, construction work began on the place of meditation in order to be ready to set up the center for the community to coexist in peace. Wat Florida Dhammaram has been developed progress until the present.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL  
"MICKEY" GANITCH

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Mr. SWALWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and service of Michael "Mickey" Ganitch, a United States Navy veteran and Pearl Harbor survivor, who passed away at the age of 102 on Wednesday, May 4, 2022.

Mickey was born in Mogadore, Ohio on November 18, 1919, as one of 14 children. Upon graduating high school in 1937, he left Ohio bound for California. On January 21, 1941, he joined the United States Navy.

Mickey served in the Navy as a Quartermaster, joining the USS *Pennsylvania* in Pearl Harbor on August 15, 1941. On December 7, 1941, while preparing for a football game against the USS *Arizona*, the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service bombardment of Pearl Harbor began. During the second air attack, a 500-pound bomb hit Mickey's ship, narrowly missing Mickey's station in the crow's nest. This attack killed 23 men and left numerous others injured. After the attack, Mickey and the USS *Pennsylvania* served as ammunition support for most major United States military invasions in the Pacific theater throughout World War II. Just before the end of the war, in 1945, Mickey survived another attack when a torpedo struck the ship he was on, killing 20 in Mickey's 26-man crew.

After the war, Mickey continued his service as a recruiter in Oakland. In the early 1960's, he met his wife, Barbara. They went on to marry in 1963. Shortly thereafter, he retired from the Navy as Senior Chief Quartermaster. He continued to work various jobs throughout his life, at a bowling alley, as a fishing net manufacturer, and as a security guard at the Alameda naval air station, where he retired in 1996.

Mickey's active involvement in his community reflected his heart of service. He served as Pearl Harbor Survivors organization state

treasurer and chapter secretary; he volunteered over 7,000 hours with the VA; he was an active member of the Masonic Lodge; and he served as head usher for his church for more than 49 years.

Mickey, Barbara, and their family have resided in the heart of my community since they arrived. I am grateful for his service and his dedication to sharing his story. He is survived by his wife Barbara, with whom he shared nearly 60 years of marriage, his four daughters, 13 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and eight great-great-grandchildren.

CONGRATULATING BARRY S.  
STERNLICHT ON HIS DEVOTION  
TO CONGREGATION AGUDATH  
SHOLOM

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Mr. HIMES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Barry S. Sternlicht for his tireless work on behalf of Congregation Agudath Sholom. His devotion to the congregational family at Agudath Sholom, the local Jewish community in Stamford and to the well-being of Jews worldwide is nothing short of inspiring. The community of southwestern Connecticut is stronger, richer and more inclusive because of the work that he does.

It is my unique honor to recognize Barry for his unyielding dedication and outstanding philanthropic contributions to his congregation. With Barry's generosity, Congregation Agudath Sholom restored its synagogue and in doing so, helped spread the core Jewish value of repairing the world. Barry's commitment to preserving the beauty of Agudath Sholom in the spirit of his father exemplifies a core tenet of Judaism: L'dor V'dor, from generation to generation.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in congratulating Barry on his immense accomplishments.

COMMENDING 50 YEARS OF DIPLO-  
MATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN  
THE UNITED STATES AND THE  
STATE OF QATAR

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to commend 50 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and the State of Qatar.

That a country slightly smaller than Connecticut is such an important partner to the United States is no mere accident. Instead, this is the direct result of the dedication and hard work of not only Qatar's leaders, but its people. I would be remiss if I did not give credit to Qatar's leaders who have ensured spending on social programs such as housing, healthcare, education, and pensions. Through this commitment, the people of Qatar have what they need to advance their Nation.

Qatar has also assisted the United States with our diplomatic and military goals in the re-

gion. In 1991, Qatar played a significant role in the Gulf War, particularly during the Battle of Khafji in which Qatari tanks engaged troops loyal to Saddam Hussein. Furthermore, Qatar allowed coalition troops from the United States, Canada, and France to operate in its territory, bolstering Operation Desert Storm. Following this successful arrangement, the United States and Qatar agreed upon the need for a Defense Cooperation Agreement. This pact, which has subsequently been expanded, has served as the basis for military collaboration for the last 30 years.

In 1996, Qatar built Al Udeid Air Base, which now serves as the forward headquarters for U.S. Central Command. Al Udeid is home to the largest U.S. military base in the Middle East and continues to be supported by Qatar, with the Qatari government having provided over \$8 billion in funding for the base over the last 20 years.

Notably, President Joe Biden met with the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, in Washington on January 31, 2022. This meeting was the first that President Biden had with a regional leader since he became president and served as a clear signal that Washington views Doha as an important partner in the region. This was underscored when the President told the Emir that the United States would nominate Qatar as a Major Non-NATO Ally. This status recognizes Qatar's growing responsibility as a strong and enduring partner in countering violent extremism, combating terrorism, and deterring external aggressors.

Qatar has also been an invaluable asset on the diplomatic front. Qatar quietly assisted in ending the Israel-Hamas war in May 2021 and continues to be helpful in seeking to improve relations between Israelis and Palestinians.

Without a doubt, Qatar's most significant diplomatic and humanitarian efforts were in the evacuation of more than 100,000 people from Afghanistan after the American withdrawal. Qatar was uniquely positioned because of its ability to speak to various parties on the ground and to escort people through Taliban-controlled Kabul.

A large percentage of the new refugees were brought to Qatar, which arranged housing and other shelter for them as well as food, medicine, and other provisions. At one point, the Qatari military was providing over 50,000 meals per day to the newly arrived refugees. There are still thousands of Afghan refugees in Qatar, where they continue to receive much needed care and assistance.

On September 7, 2021, only weeks after the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III and Secretary of State Antony Blinken flew to Doha to acknowledge the role Qatar played in the transit and care of evacuees from Afghanistan and to thank Qatar for its vital assistance. Secretary Blinken complimented Qatar's efforts in the evacuation saying, "you've facilitated the safe transit of more than 55,000 people. That's nearly half of those who were evacuated in the entire evacuation from Kabul. These are massive numbers. And as I've said a number of times, we spend a lot of time back in Washington talking about numbers: the total number of evacuees, American citizens, and so forth. But you know better than anyone that behind each of these numbers is a real person, is a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, a son, a daughter."